



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Death Valley National  
Park

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## Death Valley News Release

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### **New Visitor Center Opens at Death Valley NP**

Death Valley National Park will open the doors to a remodeled Visitor Center on Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The original Visitor Center was built in 1960 as part of the Mission 66 project -- a 10 year effort to upgrade National Park Service facilities by the agency's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1966. The Death Valley remodel, scheduled to take eighteen months, was actually completed months ahead of schedule.

Because of the historic significance, the building was nominated as a national historic structure and preserving significant features of this facility has retained the historic fabric of most of the building. However, the inside of the building has many changes, significantly, the energy efficient features that will save the park an estimated \$14,000 per year. New windows, insulation, heating and cooling systems and solar panels will contribute to the enhanced efficiency of the building. The National Park Service is committed to be carbon neutral by the year 2016—its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

A new park film narrated by actor Donald Sutherland will be shown daily beginning Thursday morning. Book sales and educational materials will be up and running in the newly expanded lobby. Due to the earlier than anticipated opening, however, new interactive exhibits will not be complete until early summer. A celebratory ribbon-cutting will take place later in the year after installation.

During the remodel, a temporary Visitor Center served the public to answer questions, assist in trip planning, and issue park passes. Ranger programs were offered in various locations throughout the park, including evenings, something that will continue even with the opening of the new auditorium. "Our guests enjoyed having park rangers present evening programs outdoors and at locations such as Dante's Peak, Badwater, and the Mesquite Dunes" said Chief of Interpretation, Terry Baldino. "The programs were very well received and visitors enjoyed the variety of venues we offered. It has been a tremendous boost to our interpretive program to be able to offer these choices to our program menu."

The remodel was made possible with funds from the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA). These include fees collected from visitors entering national parks and are used to work on deferred maintenance and recreational projects inside

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parks. This, like several FLREA projects, will upgrade existing or bring on line new facilities throughout the park.

Visitor Center hours are 8:00am to 5:00pm everyday. For more information about Death Valley National Park, go to [www.nps.gov/deva](http://www.nps.gov/deva) or call 760-786-3200.

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